

March 4, 2014

Dear Senator:

On behalf of Arizona's teachers, we are writing today to affirm our strong support for Arizona's College and Career Ready Standards (Common Core). New polling data confirms what we have heard anecdotally since the adoption of the standards in 2010: **Arizona teachers overwhelmingly support the standards.**

The Primary Sources poll commissioned by Scholastic shows that **84% of math, English language arts, science and/or social studies teachers in Arizona are enthusiastic about the implementation of the standards in their classrooms**, which is higher than the national average of 73%.

Further, Arizona teachers agree in large measure that the standards will help Arizona students develop the key skills they will need to be better prepared for college, career and life:

- 83% of math, English language arts, science and/or social studies teachers in Arizona believe the standards will have a positive impact on students' ability to think critically and use reasoning skills.
- 81% believe the standards will have a positive impact on students' ability to effectively present their ideas based on evidence.
- 78% believe the standards will have a positive impact on students' ability to read and comprehend informational texts.

This support comes from Arizona teachers despite juggling countless demands inside and outside the classroom for higher levels of accountability for teachers, principals and schools. However, this support does not come without additional need to support implementation: 75% of Arizona teachers polled voiced the need for more high-quality professional development, 76% asked for more planning time, and 74% need help in using an inquiry-based teaching approach.

We simply cannot emphasize enough that in order to realize the full potential of these standards and to see the academic improvement that we all desire, we must invest in the professional development of our teachers. Raising academic standards alone will not help our students to be prepared for college and career; they must be coupled with effective teaching that is grounded in high quality professional development in order to make a difference.

Given these critical areas of need, we ask for your continued support in keeping Arizona's College and Career Ready Standards in our classrooms and in supporting our teachers with additional professional development opportunities.

If at any time, if you would like to see the standards and how they are being taught in a local classroom, please let us know. We would be happy to arrange a visit to a school in your district so you can see for yourself how the standards are being implemented.

Sincerely,

